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Rural District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1946.

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Weardale Rural District Council.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1946.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Report for 1946.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area of District, 99,652 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of population, 8,952.

Number of inhabited houses at end of year, 2,901.

Rateable value, £46,504.

Sum represented by a penny rate £177 : 12 : 0

Employment continued good throughout the year. Wolsingham Steelworks maintained its rate of production. Rogerley Limestone Quarry closed completely in December, and Parson Byers Quarry reduced its staff to approximately 50 per cent. The men thus thrown out of work were rapidly obsorbed into newer limestone quarries and ganister and sand quarries in Upper Weardale. Lime for agricultural purposes is still produced at Broadwood and Stanhope Burn. In Stanhope Dene, Flourspar Limited have opened an old lead mine for the mining of flourspar. A steadily increasing number of men is being employed here.

The women employed in munitions work at Wolsingham and Crook have been released during this year.

Wages have maintained their high level and there has been no destitution.

Vital Statistics.

BIRTHS.

There were 155 total births (alive and still.)

Live Births	...	144
Still Births	...	11
		155

LIVE BIRTHS.

		Male	Female
Legitimate	...	62	79
Illegitimate	.....	—	3
		62	82

STILL BIRTHS.

Legitimate	...	5	5
Illegitimate	...	0	—
		5	6

On an estimated population of 8,952 these figures give the following rates for 1,000 population :—

Total Births	...	17·3
Live Births	...	16·1
Still Births	...	1·2

The rates for England and Wales were :—

Live Births	...	19.1 per 1000 population.
Still Births	.....	0.53 ,, ,, ,,

DEATHS.

The number of deaths registered as pertaining to this district were :—

Males	...	59
Females	...	67
Total	.....	126

These figures give a total death rate per 1,000 population of 14.1. The death rate for England and Wales was 11.5 per 1,000 population.

MATERNAL DEATHS.

There was one death from Puerperal Sepsis during the year.

INFANTILE DEATHS.

These numbered 4 and were as follows :—

		Male	Female
Legitimate	.....	2	2
Illegitimate	...	0	0
Total	...	2	2

These figures give a mortality rate of per 1,000 Live Births of 27.8.

The rate for England and Wales is 43 per 1,000 Live Births.

DEATHS FROM CANCER.

These numbered 15, which represents 11.9 per cent of all deaths and a cancer death rate of 1.7 per 1,000 population.

DEATHS FROM MEASLES, Nil.

DEATHS FROM WHOOPING COUGH, 1.

DEATHS FROM DIARRHOEA (under 2 years) Nil.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

	CAUSES OF DEATH	Males.	Females.
	All Causes	59	67
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid fever ...	0	0
2	Cerebro-spinal fever	0	0
3	Scarlet Fever	0	0
4	Whooping Cough	0	1
5	Diphtheria	0	0
6	Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	1
7	Other Tuberculosis	1	0
8	Syphilitic diseases	0	0
9	Influenza	0	0
10	Measles	0	0
11	Polio-myelitis and Polio-encephalitis ..	0	0
12	Infantile Encephalitis	0	0
13	Cancer of buccal cavity & oesophagus (M)	1	
	Cancer of uterus (F)		2
14	Cancer of stomach & duodenum ...	3	0
15	Cancer of breast	0	0
16	Cancer of other sites	4	5
17	Diabetes	0	0
18	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	9	15
19	Heart disease	18	22
20	Other circulatory diseases	2	1
21	Bronchitis	2	1
22	Pneumonia	1	5
23	Other respiratory diseases	1	1
24	Ulcer of stomach & duodenum ...	0	0
25	Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	0	0
26	Appendicitis	0	1
27	Other digestive diseases	2	1
28	Nephritis	2	0
29	Puerperal & post-abortion sepsis ..	0	1
30	Other maternal causes	0	0
31	Premature birth	1	0
32	Congen. malformation, birth injury and infantile diseases	1	2
33	Suicide	1	0
34	Road traffic accidents	0	0
35	Other violent causes	1	1
36	All other causes	8	7
	Total	59	67

Appended are the birth rates and death-rates for the preceeding seven years :—

	Birthrate	Deathrate
1939	14.0	13.9
1940	13.3	16.6
1941	14.2	12.9
1942	12.7	11.2
1943	13.6	13.9
1944	16.7	14.2
1945	11.4	10.8
1946	17.3	14.1

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

MEDICAL.

Medical Officers of Health (part-time)

JAS. BANNERMAN, M.B.,
(1st January to 31st March.)

DONALD THOMSON, O.B.E, M.B,
(1st April to 31st December.)

Tuberculosis Medical Officer
Venereal Diseases Medical Officer
School Medical Officer
Maternity and Child Welfare Medical Officer
Obstetric Consultants
} Under Durham County Council.

OTHERS.

Sanitary Inspector,

R. G. SUDDICK, Cert. R.S.I., Lond. (whole time).

Veterinary Surgeon
Public Analyst
Health Visitor
} Under Durham County Council.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological examinations of sputum, throat swabs and blood for diagnosis of Tuberculosis, Diphtheria and Typhoid Fever are carried out at the Public Health Laboratories, King's College, Newcastle-on-Tyne. In addition other examinations are carried out when necessary. e.g. Examination of urine and faeces and virulence tests. This valuable work is carried out at the expense of the Durham County Council.

Every practitioner in the District can make use of these facilities and a copy of every report is sent to the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 97 such examinations were carried out.

The bacteriological examinations for the Isolation Hospital are done by the Clinical Research Association, London.

During the year only 3 such examinations were carried out

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(i) Most householders in the District subscribe 5/- per annum to the Weardale Ambulance Association, whose motor ambulance is stationed at St. John's Chapel. This entitles each household to four journeys per year to Newcastle-on-Tyne at a cost of 5/- per journey. Journeys are made only with bona fide stretcher cases.

(ii) For the transport of cases of Infectious Diseases a motor ambulance car is maintained by this Council at its Isolation Hospital.

(iii) The quarry workers through their union, have a separate arrangement for the services of a motor ambulance car from Tow Law for stretcher cases and payment of train, bus or taxi fares for less serious cases. These facilities are available to the workers and their families.

(iv) At Hunstanworth a local association exists which provides at reduced charges the private hire of an ambulance to its subscribers when required.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The whole of the Area with the exception of Stanhope and the sparsely inhabited neighbourhood of Hunstanworth is provided with district Nurse-Midwives, working under local Nursing Associations. These are all affiliated to and subsidised by the Durham County Nursing Association. At Stanhope the general nursing is done by a district nurse who is not maternity trained. Maternity cases are attended by the County Council midwife stationed at Frosterley,

At Hunstanworth a local Association subscribes to the neighbouring association in Northumberland and thus have the services of the Carterway Heads Nurse Midwife when required.

TREATMENT CENTRES.

Maternity and Child Welfare centres are in operation at Wolsingham, Stanhope and St. John's Chapel. A Venereal Diseases Clinic at Durham and a Tuberculosis Clinic at Bishop Auckland are available for the district. These are all under County Council control.

HOSPITALS.

There is no general hospital in the area. By far the greater part of the cases requiring hospital treatment are sent to the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne which receives a fair amount of support from the District.

The Stanhope Emergency Hospital for chronic female cases closed in May.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances and General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

WATER SUPPLY

The water supplies were satisfactorily maintained, no shortages due to insufficient supply being reported.

The following extentions were carried out during the year:—

Two-inch asbestos cement main laid from Wearhead Chapel to Laneside.

One inch galvanized main extended to serve all properties at Sidefoot, Daddry Shield.

110 repairs to services etc., were made by your workmen.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

Repairs to the filters etc., were carried out at the Stanhope sewage works and there are no changes to report at the other sewage works in the area.

Following the arising of a nuisance, a section of the sewer in Union Lane, Stanhope, was opened and it was found that part of this sewer was an old stone drain. This was relaid by a properly constructed nine-inch earthenware sewer.

33 private drains were cleared by your workmen

RURAL WATER SUPPLIES AND SEWERAGE ACT 1944.

A scheme for improvement of the water supplies and sewerage works in the area is in course of preparation and consultations and meetings with the Consulting Engineers have taken place.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Several complaints were investigated in company with the County Health Inspector but no action was found necessary in regard to pollution.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The closets of each type remaining at the end of 1946 are :—

Water Closets	...	1274
Ash-closets	...	891
Ash-pit privies	...	321

Thirty-two applicants took advantage of the Council's scheme for a grant, of half the cost up to a maximum of £8, towards converting existing sanitary accommodation to the water carriage system.

SALVAGE.

The collection of salvage (paper, rags, scrap iron etc.) was continued. The salvage collected is sorted and sold.

The amount collected is as follows :—

Paper	.....	11 ton,	7 cwt,	2 qrs
Scrap Iron	.	1 ton,	—	—
Rags	...	—	12 cwt	—

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The estimated weight of refuse removed amounted to 2,245 tons and the mileage covered by the cleansing vehicles was 11,981. Cost of collection amounted to £2,230.

Refuse is disposed of at Sawmill Lane, Wolsingham ; Thornley Village ; Greenfoot, Stanhope ; Crawleyside ; Cowshill and Rookhope.

Three ex-army vehicles (Chevrolet) were purchased and adapted for cleansing work and the existing two vehicles were sold.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT 1910

Under a transfer of powers inaugurated by the Ministry of Food, the Council became the responsible authority for the operation of this Act in this Area. A whole time temporary Rodent Officer was appointed and a sewer campaign and block control system was carried out with satisfactory results.

The number of rats estimated to have been killed according to the Ministry of Food formula : --

Sewers	...	750
Refuse Tips	...	624
Block Control	.....	2296

SHOPS ACT—Ventilation and Temperature.

No action taken.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No action taken.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

Action was necessary on one instance for the eradication of this type of vermin at Rookhope. Treatment by zaldecide liquid spray followed with D.D.T. Gammexane Powder proved successful.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Nature of Inspections	Number	Notices Informal	Notices Formal	Complied with
Infectious diseases	30	-	-	-
Disinfection	30	-	-	
Disinfestation	2	-	-	-
Nuisances	24	12	-	12
Dwellings	89	3	8	11
Cowsheds	76		-	-
Bakehouses	10	1		1
Sanitary accommodation	55	5	-	5
Water Supply	110	2	-	2
Pigsties	2	1	-	1

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

(a) Milk Supply.

Inspections carried out in collaboration with County Officials and samples of milk taken on four occasions after premises had been certified as suitable for producing "Designated" milk. One "Tuberculin Tested" licence and three "Accredited" licences were granted by the County Medical Officer's Department.

Inspections were also carried out in connection with applications for registration to produce ordinary milk. Five farms were registered during the year.

Number of Farms producing Tuberculin Tested Milk	14
Number of Farms producing "Accredited" Milk	13
Number of Farms on Register	501

(b) Meat and Other Foods.

No slaughtering for sale is done in the district under present conditions

Visits have been paid to shops and stores in the district and generally speaking are well kept

Food was condemned as unfit for sale or human consumption on 13 instances. In each case the food was surrendered voluntarily under Ministry of Food Regulations.

There are five bakehouses in the district. These are clean and satisfactory.

SECTION D.

Housing.

Four Swedish Type Timber houses were completed and occupied at Wolsingham.

Contracts were let for 8 brick houses at Stanhope, 5 at Frosterley and 8 at Wolsingham. The work was commenced but difficulties in obtaining both labour and materials prevented these from being completed.

Further schemes were in course of preparation for houses at Stanhope (including Crawleyside), Wolsingham, Frosterley, Rookhope, Westgate, St. John's Chapel and Wearhead. In these schemes are included the provision of Airey type houses at Stanhope (20) Frosterley (10) and Rookhope (6).

SECTION E.

Prevalance of, and control over, Infectious Disease.

I received 97 notifications during the year, these were as follows :—

Disease.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet fever	20	20	0
Pneumonia	10	0	6
Measles	1	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Erysipelas	5	0	0
Whooping Cough	55	0	1
Para-Typhoid Fever	1	1	0
Puerperal Fever	2	1	1
Meningitis	3	3	0
Total	97	25	8

A widespread epidemic of Whooping Cough occurred during May and June. One death occurred in a girl aged 14 years due to Pontine Haemorrhage.

The single case of Paratyphoid Fever was found on admission to Hospital to be Tubercular Meningitis. The child died.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

During the year 112 Children were immunised by the practitioners of the District.

Of the 1,890 children under 15 years in the district 1,277 are now immunised against Diphtheria. This gives a protection rate of 67.7 per cent.

Children of school age in the District total 1,260 and of these 1,061 (84.2 per cent) are immunised.

Children under school age in the District total 630 and of these 216 (34.3) per cent) are immunised.

The absence of diphtheria in the District during the year is no doubt due to the high rate of protection among school children.

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1	1	1						
5		1		1				
15		1		1		1		
25	2	1	1		1			
35			1					
45								
55	1	1						
65 and upward ...	2						1	
Totals ...	6	5	2	2	1	1	1	0

In all 15 notifications were received. Of these 11 were for Tuberculosis of the lungs and 4 were for Tuberculosis of other parts of the body.

Of the 3 deaths due to Tuberculosis two were the result of Tuberculosis of the chest and one was the result of Tuberculosis of other parts.

The Tuberculosis Death Rate for the year was 0.3 per 1,000 population.

I am,

Yours obediently,

DONALD THOMSON.